

A group of six performers, three men and three women, are dressed in traditional Phu Thai attire, consisting of blue long-sleeved shirts and trousers with red accents and beaded necklaces. They are performing in a courtyard in front of a traditional Thai temple with a red-tiled roof and ornate carvings. One man is kneeling in the foreground, gesturing with his hands. Another man stands behind him, playing a stringed instrument. A woman to the right is also kneeling, gesturing. In the background, another man plays a long, thin wind instrument. A young boy stands to the left, holding a small drum. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

# Nakhon Phanom

## TOURIST INFORMATION

*Phu Thai dancers and musicians  
perform at Phra That Renu*

EXOTIC  
**Thailand**





## Introduction

**N**akhon Phanom is a northeastern province, bordering Laos across the Mekong River, and covering some 5,312 square kilometres. The riverside provincial capital is 735 kilometres northeast of Bangkok.

Nakhon Phanom literally means 'City of Mountains', the name derived from rugged mountains behind the Laotian settlement of Tha Kaek which faces Nakhon Phanom on the opposite bank of the Mekong River.

Laotian influences are seen in Nakhon Phanom's dialect, customs, architecture and cuisine. Many unique folk dances are performed on special occasions, and the custom of extending a generous welcome to guests can be seen during the *Bai-Sri-Su-Kwan* ceremony.

Nakhon Phanom's major religious monument, Phra That Phanom, is highly revered throughout northeastern Thailand and Laos.

## City Attractions

### Wat Okatsribuaban

Located beside the Mekong River, next to the Indochina Market, this temple contains two highly revered and ancient Buddha images.

### Wat Srithep Pradittharam

This temple is noteworthy for a beautiful ordination hall with delightful murals, and revered Buddha images, and a

statue of Luang Pu Chan, a widely respected ecclesiastic throughout Thailand's Northeast.

### Riverside Promenade

This provides a clear view across the Mekong River to the Laotian settlement of Tha Kaek and its mountain backdrop which is especially scenic at sunrise, and during the late afternoon.

### Terdprakiat Park & Strand

This riverside area is particularly popular during February, through April, when river water drops to reveal unspoiled sand stretching almost to the Laotian side of the Mekong. The area is a favoured spot for picnics.

### Phu Kratae Golf Course

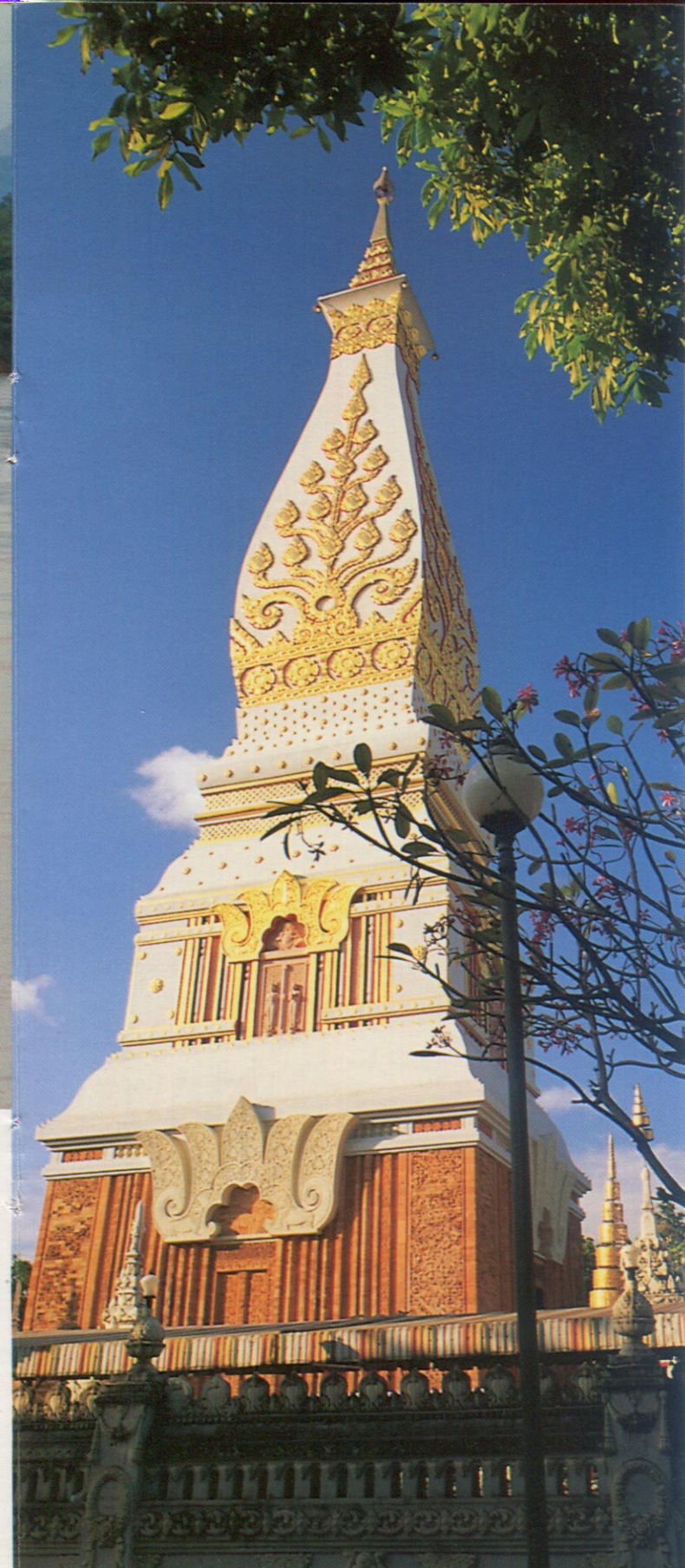
This picturesque 9-hole golf course is located at the Technical College (4 kilometres from Nakhon Phanom on the Sakhon Nakhon Road) and occupies more than 80 acres of land around the Phu Katae reservoir.

## Out-of-City Attractions

### Renu Nakhon

Renu Nakhon is 51 kilometres south of Nakhon Phanom provincial capital, via Highway No.212 until the Km 44 marker, and Highway No. 2031. The town is best known for the **Phu Thai** ethnic minority who retain their ancient culture, namely in the form of dances and the custom of the *Bai-Sri-Su-Kwan* welcoming ceremony. Many local products, including woven cotton, are on sale at local shops.





### Phra That Renu

This was built during the early 1900s to resemble the larger Phra That Phanom, and to house sacred scriptures and golden Buddha images.

### Phra That Phanom

This highly revered riverside temple is located 52 kilometres south of Nakhon Phanom provincial capital on Highway No. 212, and is believed to date back more than twelve centuries. The more than 50-metre-high pagoda is one of the most revered shrines in northeast Thailand and regularly attracts pilgrims. A museum within the compound houses many ancient relics.

### Phra That Srikhun (Na Kae)

Some 55 kilometres southwest of the provincial capital, this pagoda bears a strong resemblance to Phra That Phanom. The square base is decorated with *bas relief*.

Left to Right  
A traditional Bai-Sri-Su-Kwan  
welcoming ceremony vignette,  
the Laotian Town of Tha Kaek as  
seen from Nakhon Phanom, the pagoda  
of Phra That Phanom, murals inside Wat  
Srithep Pradittharam.

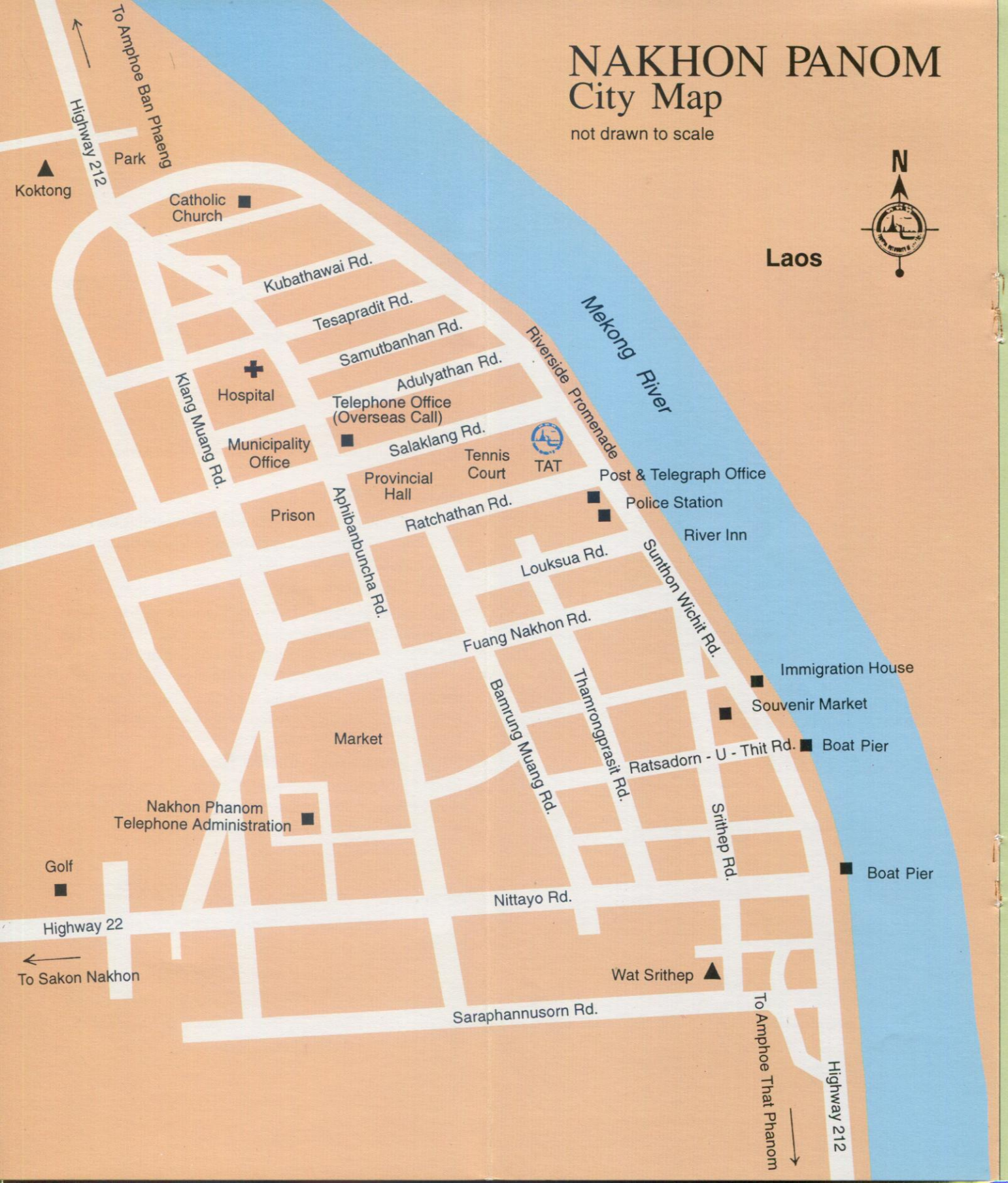


# NAKHON PANOM City Map

not drawn to scale



Laos





# NAKHON PANOM Provincial Map

not drawn to scale

Nong Khai

Tad Poh Waterfall  
Tad Kham Waterfall

Na Thom

Ban Phaeng

Mekong River

Laos



Si Songkhram

Na Wa

(2436)

(2132)

Phra That Prasit

(2436)

Phra That Tha-Uthen

Tha Uthen

(2032)

(2028)

Phon Sawan

Muang

(2028)

(22)

(212)

Sakon Nakhon

Phra That Mahachai

(2276)

(2033)

Pla Pak

Renu Nakhon

Phra That Renu Nakhon

(2031)

Na Kae

Phra That Phanom

(223)

That Phanom

Dan Sao Coi

Phra That Srikhun

Phra Wet Cave

Mukdahan

Laos

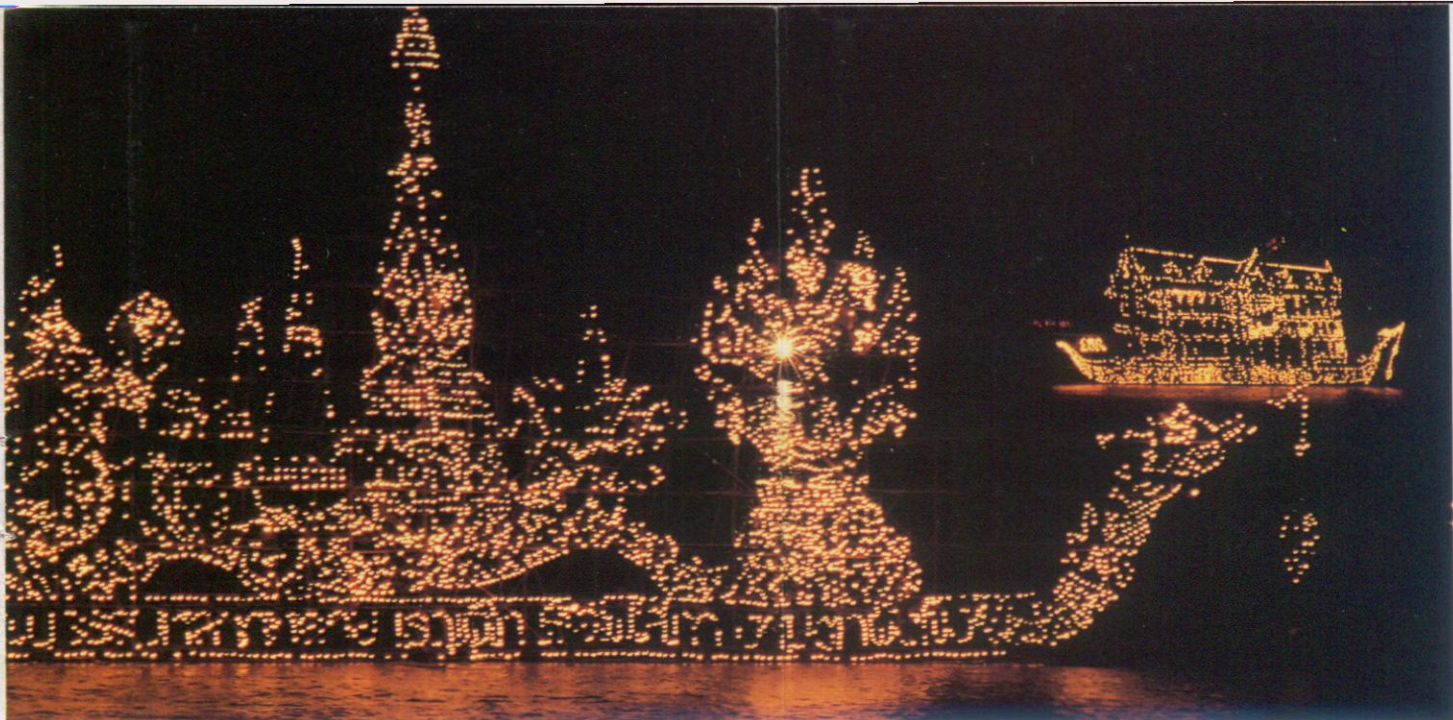
Mekong River





Clockwise from Top Left:  
*Illuminated Boats Festival scenes re-  
 enacted every October, thrilling Thai-Lao  
 boat races on the Mekong River, and a  
 local silk weaver*  
 Overleaf:  
*Colourful Phu Thai dancers*





### **Dan Sao Coi (Na Kae)**

This scenic viewpoint 6 kilometres from Na Kae offers panoramic views of Phra That Phanom and adjacent areas.

### **Phra That Tha-Uthen**

This shrine, north of the provincial capital, along Highway No. 212, bears noted resemblance to Phra That Phanom. It was constructed in 1912 to house a Buddha disciple's relic which came from Yangoon in Myanmar (Burma).

### **Wat Triphum**

This riverside temple in Tha Uthen district contains the ancient 80-inch-tall Phra Bang Buddha image which, it is believed, needs only to be paraded around town to ensure plentiful rainfall.

### **Phra That Prasit**

This is in Wat Phra That Prasit, some 80 kilometres northwest of Nakhon Phanom provincial capital in Na Wa district.

### **Phu Lungka**

92 kilometres northwest of Nakhon Phanom provincial capital, along Highway No. 212, and 6 kilometres from Ban Phaeng, this hill is where many streams originate. There are numerous wild flowers, orchids and trees.

### **Tad Kham Waterfall (Ban Phaeng)**

This forest area marks the place where streams originating from Phu Lungka unite. The resultant river cascades through the multi-tiered waterfall.

### **Tad Pho Waterfall**

2 kilometres north of Tad Kham Waterfall, this fall can be

reached only after a 30-40-minute walk. The fall can be seen from Highway 212.

### **Phra That Mahachai**

39 kilometres from Nakhon Phanom provincial capital, along Highway 22 to Sakon Nakhon, this pagoda contains a relic of the Lord Buddha. A mural depicting the history of Buddhism adorns the walls of the ordination hall.

## **Special Events**

### **Phra That Phanom Festival**

This 7-day festival takes place during the full moon period of the third lunar month, generally in late February or early March, and is centred on the revered shrine. Religious merit-making, folk entertainment and native bazaars number among activities attracting pilgrims from northeast Thailand and neighbouring Laos.

### **Annual Illuminated Boat Festival**

This occurs in the provincial capital and forms part of the celebrations marking the end of the annual 3-month Buddhist Rains Retreat. Celebrated in late October, during the period of the full moon, the 7-day festival commemorates the occasion when the Buddha returned to Earth after preaching to his mother in Heaven. People traditionally showed their respect by illuminating their boats. During the festival, there are dragon-boat races on the Mekong River, frequently featuring Thai and Laotian teams, and the festival finishes with an illuminated boat procession in which model bamboo boats are decorated with lights.



# How To Get There

## By Road (Self-drive)

Bangkok-Saraburi-Nakhon Ratchasima-Ban Phai district in Khon Kaen-Maha Sarakham-Kalasin-Sakon Nakhon-Nakhon Phanom, a distance of 735 kilometres via Highway No. 1 (Phaholyothin), Highway No.2, Highway No. 23.

## By Bus

Airconditioned coaches and non-airconditioned buses regularly leave the Northeastern Bus Terminal on Bangkok's Phaholyothin Road throughout the day. Further details may be obtained from 279-4484-7 (air) and 271-0101-5 (non-air) in Bangkok.

## By Air

Thai Airways operates daily flights from Bangkok via Sakon Nakhon. Further details may be obtained from Thai Airways in Bangkok (Tel: 280-0070-80, 233-3810).

# Accommodation

A comprehensive list of airconditioned and non-air-conditioned accommodation, and restaurants, in Nakhon Phanom, can be obtained from the local Tourism Authority of Thailand office on Sunthon Wichit Road. The office is open seven days a week, throughout the year, from 8.30 AM until 4.30 PM.



## Tourism Authority of Thailand

### Head Office

4 Ratchadamnoen Nok Avenue  
Bangkok 10100, Thailand  
Tel: (66 2) 281-0422 (20 lines)  
Fax: (66 2) 224-6221

### Nakhon Phanom Office

18 4/1 Sunthon Wichit Road  
Nakhon Phanom 48000  
Tel: (042) 513-490-1  
Fax: (042) 513-492